

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over FALCO et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,700,869) in view of WAKEMAN et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,594,702); allows claims 8-20; and objects to claims 2-7 as allowable if rewritten into independent form. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claim 1 based on FALCO et al. and WAKEMAN et al.

By way of the present amendment, Applicants cancel claim 2 without prejudice or disclaimer and amends claim 1 to improve form. No new matter has been added by way of the present amendment. Claims 1 and 3-20 remain pending.

At the outset, Applicants note with appreciation the indication that claims 8-20 are allowable over the art of record and that claims 2-7 would be allowable if rewritten into independent form to include all the features of the base claim and any intervening claims.

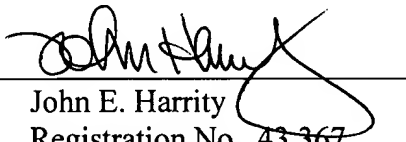
Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over FALCO et al. in view of WAKEMAN et al. While not acquiescing in this rejection, but merely to expedite prosecution, Applicants have amended claim 1 herewith to include the features recited in now-canceled claim 2, which the Examiner identified as including allowable subject matter. Therefore, Applicants submit that claim 1 is patentable over FALCO et al. and WAKEMAN et al.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner's reconsideration of this application, and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1070 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

HARRITY & SNYDER, L.L.P.

By: 
John E. Harrity
Registration No. 43,367

Date: August 29, 2005

11240 Waples Mill Road
Suite 300
Fairfax, Virginia 22030
(571) 432-0800

Customer Number: 45114